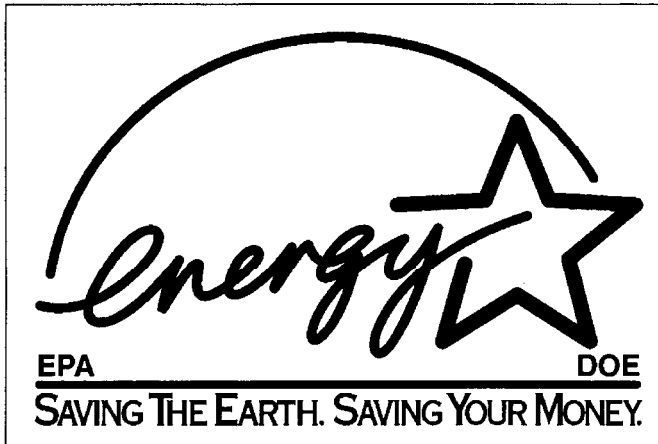


ENERGY STAR enables utilities to improve efficiency and customer service

*By Jill Abelson, communications specialist,
ENERGY STAR labeling program.*

Encourage activities that promote energy innovation. Improve efficiencies.



The ENERGY STAR label alerts customers that a particular product exceeds federal energy efficiency standards.

Lower the cost of providing energy services to your customers. Looking for an easy way to accomplish DEED's mission? Consider ENERGY STAR.

The ENERGY STAR label was created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy to help utilities, retailers, and manufacturers promote the use of over 25 products for the home and office, including appliances, consumer electronics, windows, lighting fixtures, equipment, and even new homes. ENERGY STAR-labeled products are significantly more efficient than standard products, with some exceeding federal efficiency standards by as much as 50 percent. By creating partnerships with utilities, retailers and manufacturers, ENERGY STAR is working to establish a sustainable consumer market for these supe-

rior technologies and products.

For consumers – your customers – the benefits of choosing ENERGY STAR products are obvious: home owners can use energy more efficiently, make their

homes more comfortable, help reduce air pollution, and save money in the process.

ENERGY STAR can also offer many benefits for utilities. Utility Partners have successfully used the ENERGY STAR label as a low-cost "platform" in their own energy efficiency and market transformation programs. Utilities leverage federal publicity and technical activities and coordinate their resources to bring a

simple energy efficiency message to their customers and – if they want – provide financial incentives for their customers to buy these products. In light of industry restructuring, such relationships are increasingly important to utilities seeking a competitive advantage. In fact, utility managers have hailed ENERGY STAR-labeled products as consumers' "best bet" to save energy and money.

Twenty utilities nationwide, serving 20 million customers, are currently ENERGY STAR Partners. They are actively working in their service areas to help customers save money on utility bills and use energy more efficiently, through consumer education, retailer initiatives, and energy services. Pacific Gas and Electric of California distributes colorful bill stuffers and bulletins drawing

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Innovative opportunity for utilities

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customer attention to ENERGY STAR. Thirteen utilities in New England, including Boston Edison and NEES, are running TV ads and promotions with retailers for selected ENERGY STAR products. Sacramento Municipal Utility District conducts both consumer education and retailer sales training activities. Other utility groups support volume purchasing initiatives. Activities vary, depending on regulatory issues, corporate objectives, and of course, resources.

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Participating Partners receive a full range of materials and services; free point-of-purchase and sales training materials for retail initiatives; coordination with ongoing regional and national brand promotions; and a new way to position themselves in a competitive marketplace. To become participating partners, utilities:

- sign partnership agreements with EPA and DOE;

- follow ENERGY STAR logo use guidelines; and
- at a minimum, agree to conduct general promotions.

If you haven't seen the ENERGY STAR label, you will. ENERGY STAR has been featured widely in the national media and in publications across the

country. McDonald's, Blockbuster Video, Kinko's and other major corporations help promote the label. More than 1,200 national and local retailers advertise the label and promote

qualifying products nationally. Over 1,200 manufacturers have joined as Partners. The list grows daily.

Make ENERGY STAR a part of your successful efficiency efforts. For more information about ENERGY STAR and the benefits of becoming a Utility Partner or Endorser, contact Caroline Hard at (301) 588-9387. You can also visit the ENERGY STAR website at <http://www.energystar.gov>. ■

Additional ENERGY STAR information resources available

Additional information on the ENERGY STAR program is available to DEED members through the Grab Bag in this issue of the *Digest*. These materials include two consumer brochures and an orientation packet for utilities interested in participating in the ENERGY STAR program.

The first brochure, *Saving With ENERGY STAR*, is a consumer-oriented brochure on the ENERGY STAR program, provided by EPA. It includes information for consumers on what the ENERGY STAR label means for them.

The second brochure is called *Save Money and Save the Environment: A Consumer Guide to Buying Energy Efficient Products for the Home*. This is a good, simple brochure on energy efficiency in the home. This brochure is published through the consumer research council.

Utilities can get copies of both these brochures to distribute to their customers. In addition, orientation kits on participating in the ENERGY STAR program are also available.

If you are interested in samples of the consumer brochures, or an orientation kit, check the appropriate box on the Grab Bag form on page 7 (descriptions are on page 8). You can also, visit the ENERGY STAR website at www.energystar.gov for more information. ■